

JERUSALEM A BURDENSOME STONE

(Distributed by Pontiac Bible Students, Michigan.)

“And in that day will I [God] make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.”—Zechariah 12:3.

Unfortunately the United States voted for the United Nations resolution, which condemned Israel’s settlements on the West Bank. It called on Israel to “dismantle the existing settlements” in the territories acquired in the 1967 war. This would also include the Jewish quarter of old Jerusalem. Later President Carter said he didn’t realize that Jerusalem was involved in the resolution.

The U.N. debate was prompted by an Israeli decision to move Jews into Hebron. What irony! Hebron is one of the four “Holy Cities” of Judaism, which for close to four thousand years sustained a continuous Jewish settlement that was nearly decimated by Arab terrorists in 1929. Who could question the Jew’s historic right to settle there?

Some facts of history must be restated. Jordan, contrary to the 1947 U.N. partition plan for Palestine, seized the West Bank and old Jerusalem during the 1948 war in which seven Arab nations failed in their attempt to destroy the new Israeli state founded by the U.N. When Jordan attacked Israel during the 1967 war, the Israelis took the West Bank and old Jerusalem which were never legally Jordan’s.

In 1922 the League of Nations recognized the legal, moral and historic right of the Jewish people to a national home in Palestine, including the West Bank and Jerusalem. Since then vast oil reserves were discovered in Arab lands. If the Jews had a right to the West Bank and Jerusalem in 1922, that right is valid today. But the nations are compromising Israel’s rights for their own oil interests.

Much is being said about the rights of the “Palestinian Arabs” to an independent state on the West Bank. The term “Palestinian Arab” is a myth of history created in the 1950’s to capture the sympathies of the world for the Arabs’ determination to destroy Israel. Israel well knew that such a Palestinian Arab state would become the launching pad for the Palestine Liberation organization’s avowed purpose to destroy the Israeli state. Billions of Arab oil dollars are making this propaganda campaign of selling the “Palestinian Arab” myth a success. Yet the fact of history remains. The Arabs never called the territory Palestine, but rather “Southern Syria,” and those who settled there called themselves “Southern Syrians.” For example, one of the main spokesmen for the Palestinian Arabs in the United States, W. F. Abboushi, Professor of Political Science at the University of Cincinnati, still refers to Palestine as “Southern Syria” in his book **THE ANGRY**

ARABS (pp. 120-123). This is all the more significant in that he is an Arab who was born in Palestine.

Further, the total number of “Palestinian Arabs” both outside and inside the Israeli state is variously estimated from one and a half million to well over two million. Where did all of these Arabs come from? The fact that their historic rootage is not Palestinian is shown by some revealing figures given by another exponent of the Palestinian cause. Philip K. Hitti, an Arab and Professor Emeritus of Semitic Literature of Princeton University, observed in his book *THE HISTORY OF ARABS* (pp. 728) that in the early 1800’s the Arab population of Palestine was less than two hundred thousand. From the 1870’s onward Jewish money and Jewish immigration started an economic upswing in the Holy Land and Arabs from all the surrounding countries began to flow to Palestine. The vast majority of these so-called “Palestinian Arabs” have no historic roots in the land. They are immigrants or the children of immigrants from Syria and the surrounding Arab lands. At the conclusion of World War I (1918), both the Arabs and the Jews asked the Allied victors for independent nations. Since then the Arabs of the Middle East and North Africa have been generously rewarded with over twenty new nations and now they are demanding that their countrymen who have migrated to Palestine also be given an independent Arab state. Of course all of this would be at the expense of Israeli territory.

President Carter has been urging Israeli Premier Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to try to move the stalemated negotiations over autonomy for “Palestinian Arabs” in the West Bank and Gaza. Also, pressure is mounting to force Israel to give the old City of Jerusalem to the Arabs. Our economy is in such bad shape that it is questionable whether President Carter can withstand the pressure of the Arab oil interests to take a harder line with Israel. But what is of far greater consequence is that the Lord warned in Zechariah 12:3 that all who oppose Israel over Jerusalem “Shall be cut to pieces” for there is a higher dimension in this issue Divine Providence. The new Israeli state is a miracle of history prophesied in the Bible. Its boundaries, which include the West Bank, were foretold. (Gen. 15:18-21; Jer. 16:13-15; Zech. 10:9, 10) Its reclamation of waste lands (Amos 9:14), climatic changes (Zech. 8:11, 12; Joel 2:21-23), and capture of old Jerusalem (Zech. 12:5, 6) were prophesied. Eventually the Arabs will recognize Israel’s rights. Then Israel shall be “a blessing in the midst of the earth.”—Isaiah 19:24.